



# MEDIA RELEASE

## Workplace safety authorities progress injury prevention campaigns

31 May 2007

Australian and New Zealand workplace safety authorities, meeting as the Heads of Workplace Safety Authorities (HWSA)\* in Melbourne this week (29 May), discussed progress of a range of initiatives to further Occupational Health and Safety management in Australian workplaces.

Initiatives include preventing injuries from falls, unguarded machinery, large mobile machinery and manual handling.

HWSA Chair, John Watson, said the national workplace safety campaigns currently being implemented are a key component in reducing the large number of injuries and deaths associated with these activities.

“The **Large Mobile Plant in Civil Construction** campaign, which aims to improve the safety of people working around large moving plant, has completed a two-month workplace visit phase,” Mr Watson said.

“Inspectors across Australia have visited over 600 construction sites to assess the level of safety for workers and pedestrians on civil construction sites. The information will now be collated, analysed and reported back to HWSA later in the year.

“Meanwhile the **Manual Handling in the Manufacturing Industry** campaign is focusing on the reduction of injuries resulting from heavy lifting, repetitive tasks and sustained awkward posture,” he said.

“Under this project, jurisdictions have undertaken telephone surveys of employers and educational workshops providing practical guidance to prevent manual handling injuries focusing on issues identified during the surveys.

“The **Labour Hire in the Food Industry** national campaign has been focusing on developing nationally consistent guidance material to assist labour hire agencies and host employers manage the safety of on-hired workers.

“Information sessions and workplace visits by Inspectors have been conducted to improve workplace safety for on-hired workers in the food manufacturing industry.”

Mr Watson said that HWSA had also approved a plan for a new campaign aimed at **Guarding of Machinery in the Manufacturing Industry**.

“Under this campaign high-risk sub-sectors of the manufacturing industry will be identified and nationally consistent guidance material developed to assist industry identify and manage risks associated with operating machinery in manufacturing,” said Mr Watson.

HSWA members are considering a project plan for a national campaign on the **Prevention of Falls in General Construction**, directed at reducing workplace injuries and deaths arising from falls within the construction industry.

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HWSA members approved a previous campaign report associated with **Demolition and Asbestos Removal in the Construction Industry**. A key aim of the campaign was improving the level of compliance in demolition work and any associated asbestos removal.

“Increasing the capacity of contractors to recognise and control related risks and hazards was another positive outcome of the campaign.”

The members discussed the continued harmonisation of operational activities of the various occupational health and safety jurisdictions to improve workplace safety outcomes and have agreed to a strategy to reduce obstructions in the take up of the various standards declared by the Australian Safety and Compensation Council.

\*HWSA brings together senior executive officers from the Commonwealth, state and territory and New Zealand workplace safety authorities to progress harmonisation and improvement in occupational health and safety.

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